



With respect to patent applications, the applicants point out their duty under M.P.E.P. §2001.06(b) to disclose relevant patent applications of which they are aware. To this end, the applicants draw the Examiner's attention to the following patent applications:

1. United States Patent Number 6,023,540, issued February 8, 2000; U.S.S.N. 09/151,877, filed September 11, 1998; U.S.S.N. 09/450,829, filed November 29, 1999.
2. U.S.S.N. 08/944,850, filed October 6, 1997; U.S.S.N. 09/287,573, filed April 6, 1999.
3. U.S.S.N. 09/189,543, filed November 10, 1998; U.S.S.N. 09/344,526, filed June 24, 1999; U.S.S.N. 09/748,706, filed December 22, 2000.
4. U.S.S.N. 09/256,943, filed February 24, 1999; and U.S.S.N. 09/473,904, filed December 28, 1999; U.S.S.N. 09/606,369, filed June 28, 2000.

None of the foregoing references are believed to disclose the invention as claimed. Nothing herein shall constitute an admission concerning the contents of any of the cited references, nor shall the inclusion of a reference herein be considered an admission that the reference constitutes prior art against the invention claimed in the above-identified application. Submission of the present document shall not be construed as an admission that a search has been made or that better art does not exist.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required,  
or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1300 (Our Order No.  
A-67851-2/DJB/RMS/DCF).

Respectfully submitted,

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